

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 2248 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BELGRADE
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TAGS: PEPR, PINT, CSCE, SHUM, UR, US
SUBJECT: LITGAZ ATTEMPTS TO DISCREDIT AVITAL SHCHARANSKAYA

1. NASTY ANTI-SHCHARANSKIY ARTICLE APPEARS IN FEBRUARY 15
"LITERATURNAYA GAZETA" (LIGGAZ). APPARENT PURPOSE OF
ARTICLE, ENTITLED "ADVENTURESS ON TOUR" AND DATELINED
TASS, WASHINGTON, D.C., IS TO DISCREDIT AVITAL
SHCHARANSKAYA. PIECE COMBINES TWO TASS ENGLISH WIRE
ARTICLES, ONE OF FEBRUARY 8, ALSO ENTITLED "ADVENTURESS
ON TOUR", THE OTHER OF FEBRUARY 10 ENTITLED "ONCE AGAIN
CONCERNING AN ANTI-SOVIET CAMPAIGN." ASSUME DEPARTMENT
HAS FULL TEXTS.

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2. ARTICLE DESCRIBES PUBLIC APPEARANCES IN U.S. OF "PERSON
CALLING HERSELF AVITAL SHCHARANSKAYA" AND CLAIMING TO BE
WIFE OF ANOTOLIY SHCHARANSKIY. IT SAYS SHE SOMETIMES
APPEARS "AT PROPAGANDA SHOWS" WITH THE WIFE OF THE ISRAELI
AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S., SOMETIMES WITH MEMBERS OF ANTI-
SOVIET EMIGRE ORGANIZATIONS, WITH "SENATOR-DEMAGOGUE"

MOYNIHAN OR WITH OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVES. AT THESE PUBLIC MEETINGS, SHE ALLEGEDLY CONDEMNS CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND PLEADS FOR HELP IN BEING REUNITED WITH HER HUSBAND. HER PLEAS, THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, HAVE BEEN SO EFFECTIVE THAT LEADERS OF PROTESTANT, CATHOLIC AND JEWISH RELIGIOUS GROUP HAVE SENT AN EMOTIONAL APPEAL TO THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ASKING FOR SHCHARANSKIY'S RELEASE.

3. ARTICLE STATES THAT WOMAN IN QUESTION IS ACTUALLY NATAL'S SHTIGLITS, WHO EMIGRATED IN 1973, AND THAT HER ONLY CONNECTION WITH SHCHARANSKIY IS THAT BEFORE HER DEPARTURE FROM USSR SHCHARANSKIY TRIED TO ARRANGE A RELIGIOUS WEDDING WITH HER, IN ORDER TO IMPROVE HIS OWN CHANCES OF GETTING AN EXIT VISA. HOWEVER, DUE TO HIS REFUSAL TO HAVE THIS CEREMONY PERFORMED IN A SYNAGOGUE, NEITHER A CIVIL NOR A RELIGIOUS WEDDINGHEVER TOOK PLACE.

4. IN A POSTSCRIPT, LITGAZ CLAIMS THAT NATAL'YA SHTIGLITS' PARENTS, WHO ARE STILL IN THE SOVIET UNION, LEARNED OF HER APPEARANCES FROM FOREIGN BROADCASTS AND HAVE WRITTEN TO SENATORS MOYNIHAN AND JAVITS COMPLAINING THAT THEIR DAUGHTER IS BEING "USED BY CERTAIN CIRCLES" IN THE U.S. AND ISRAEL FOR THEIR OWN, ILL-INTENTIONED PURPOSES.

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5. LITGAZ ATTEMPTS TO DOCUMENT ITS CASE BY SHOWING PARTIAL PHOTOCOPIES OF SHCHARANSKIY'S 1973 APPLICATION FOR EMIGRATION DOCUMENTS, IN WHICH HE APPARENTLY STATED THAT HE WISHED TO TRAVEL TO ISRAEL TO BE REUNITED WITH HIS FIANCÉE, LYUBOV' YERSHKOVICH.

6. COMMENT: AS WITH VIRTUALLY ALL LITGAZ SMEARS, THIS PIECE UNDOUBTEDLY CONTAINS MUCH MORE DISINFORMATION THAN FACT. IT IS TRUE, IN ANY CASE, THAT UNDER SOVIET LAW A MARRIAGE IS CONSIDERED LEGAL ONLY IF THE OFFICIALLY PRESCRIBED CIVIL CEREMONY IS HELD. MATLOCK UNQUOTE VANCE

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